

APPLICANT FEEDBACK SUMMARY

FY2012 AmeriCorps State and National Grant Competition

Legal Applicant Name: Southeast Arkansas Education Service Cooperative (SEARK)	Application ID: 12AC134671
Program Name: AR Smart Start AmeriCorps Tutoring	

For the purpose of enhancing our programs by improving the quality and quantity of applications to the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), we are providing specific feedback regarding the strengths and weaknesses of this application. This feedback is provided on a restricted basis and cannot be shared or distributed outside of your organization. We hope you will find this information helpful in completing applications to our future grant competitions. These comments are not meant to represent a comprehensive assessment; rather the analysis represents those elements that had the greatest bearing on the rating of your application. Please note that this feedback consists of summary comments from more than one reviewer. For this reason, some of the comments may seem to be inconsistent or contradictory.

Reviewers' Summary Comments:

- The applicant has effectively identified a compelling community need—limited literacy and math proficiency of elementary students in rural Southeast Arkansas—by presenting data from benchmark tests that show notable achievement deficits for these students.
- The applicant proposes to provide more intensive services to ESL elementary students but has not provided evidentiary support on the number or percentage of ESL students that have literacy and math deficits, only that their numbers are increasing in the target communities.
- Member roles are well defined and include recruiting 73 part-time Members from local postsecondary institutions who will be trained to implement the in-school tutorial program at 15 elementary schools within the nine targeted districts. Approximately 700 students will receive 32 hours of math and literacy tutorial support. (-) The applicant proposes to use some high school students as Members, but it is unclear how the high school students will participate as tutors given the 8:00am to 3:00pm program hours.
- The applicant effectively describes its use of several evidence-based strategies to support program delivery: National Reading Panel, Arkansas Reading First, No Child Left Behind, and the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics. All methodologies support key components of solving the identified need.
- The applicant describes an effective plan to promote a powerful service experience and a continued ethic of service by embedding within its training model structured opportunities to reflect on service, participate in local AmeriCorps projects, and make connections with other AmeriCorps members.
- The applicant has presented a compelling and clear presentation, fulfilling the requirements and beyond. This program can be expected to perform a very good delivery of services to the targeted community.
- The applicant clearly provides a single goal to its program even though there are five components to their plan, with the goal being to provide tutoring services to at-risk and ESL K-5 grade students.

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- The applicant outlines multiple levels of data collection, including AmeriCorps members, host site supervisors, and the Program Director.
- The applicant proposes providing tutoring services to ESL students, but does not provide evidence that the need for said services is increasing—only that the ESL population size is increasing.
- The training plan was limited with regard to developing ESL-specific tutoring concepts.
- The applicant describes the needs of the community and the needs of the population to be served by the program.
- The applicant describes the interventions that they will carry out to address the needs of the community.
- The applicant does not describe how the Members will achieve outcomes, and does not specify any outcomes or results.
- The strength of this proposal lies in the applicant's use of strategies that are in place and fully supported by the school district.
- The weakness of this proposal lies in the lack of justified need for programs such as parental involvement and ESL in their area.